

Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, 28 March, 2006, 10:00a.m. (HST) **Location:** DTS and telephone conference

Subject: Environmental Justice (EJ) coordination meeting with FTA EJ

Attendees: Jim Barr, Jim Ryan, Joe Ossi, Carolyn Mulvihill, FTA, Headquarters
Ray Sukys, Donna Turchie, FTA, Region 9
Faith Miyamoto, Phyllis Kurio, Ken Banao, DTS
Lawrence Spurgeon, Nami Ohtomo, Veronica Chan, PB

- The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how to evaluate where “communities of concern” (minority and low-income populations) exist, determine potential disproportionate and adverse impacts to them, and document consideration of EJ and Title VI concerns. EJ can be a way of helping to comply with Title VI. The overall goal is to try to avoid discriminating against anyone.
- PB provided background on the project indicating that the project development process would consist of an Alternatives Analysis (AA), then a Draft EIS. Joe Ossi was concerned that scoping will have to follow AA, if the AA influences the alternatives being considered in the Draft EIS. FTA stated that, “FTA requires scoping at the conclusion of the AA and the start of the NEPA process. FTA has not yet concluded whether a new NOI will be required.” DTS and PB will address this issue with FTA with future coordination.
- PB proposed the following evaluation method for the HHCTC project [as shown in the EJ Analysis Flow Chart (handout)]:
 - 1) Quantitative analysis (“preliminary assessment”) using census data, followed by qualitative analysis (“secondary assessment”) based on other existing sources and local knowledge.
 - 2) Because the goal of EJ is to analyze potential disproportionate and adverse effects, and because such effects are anticipated in the study corridor, not island-wide, the proposed methodology focuses on census tracts in the corridor. However, all census tracts island-wide would be used to develop a “background” threshold against which populations in the corridor would be compared.
 - 3) Analyze existing low-income populations using the Census poverty threshold which is readily available in census data. PB pointed out that the DOT Order (5610.2) defines low-income as at or below the HHS poverty guidelines and that there is a difference between the HHS poverty guidelines and the Census poverty threshold. FTA indicated that if the Census poverty threshold is to be used, it should be clearly stated and documented and that there should be concurrence among the agencies involved, including EPA. FTA was also concerned that smaller communities within census tracts could be overlooked. PB will be using a “reality check” step to account for those smaller areas that should be considered.
 - 4) Analyze existing minority populations using detailed race and additional analysis for linguistically isolated populations. PB indicated that the federal definition of minority does not help to locate “disadvantaged” populations, due to Hawaii’s racial diversity; therefore, analysis of Census “detailed race”

Summary:

categories was proposed as one option. "Detailed race" is available only at the census tract level, not for the more refined block group unit. FTA indicated that detailed race does not have to be calculated; rather, federally-defined race categories should be used at the block group level to calculate concentration of minorities. If after calculating/documenting the results of race-based data, the results do not appear to be meaningful for the local population, analysis should rely on other factors, such as income and linguistic isolation. Data should also be supplemented with other factors, such as zero car households, senior and handicapped populations, and community input. PB will focus more on linguistically isolated and low-income populations, and secondary assessment analysis to determine communities of concern. Minority (using federal definitions) and low-income will be calculated at the block group level. FTA reiterated that the proposed method should be clearly stated and documented.

- FTA indicated that the assessments should be used to develop a community profile and to determine strategies for public outreach.
- HHCTC team has been implementing and will continue to implement its public outreach program. The assessments of the EJ analysis will be fed back into refining the public outreach program. Results of public outreach will also be used for the EJ analysis.

Actions Required:

1. DTS shall coordinate with EPA for concurrence on methodology for low-income factor.
2. DTS shall develop a Community Impact Assessment for complying with environment justice.

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	<u>Meeting Attendees</u>		

The above meeting summary is believed to be accurate to the best of the author's knowledge. Meeting attendees are encouraged to send corrections and addenda to the content of these minutes. If no corrections and/or addenda are received within five days from the date of this report, these minutes will be construed as the official record.